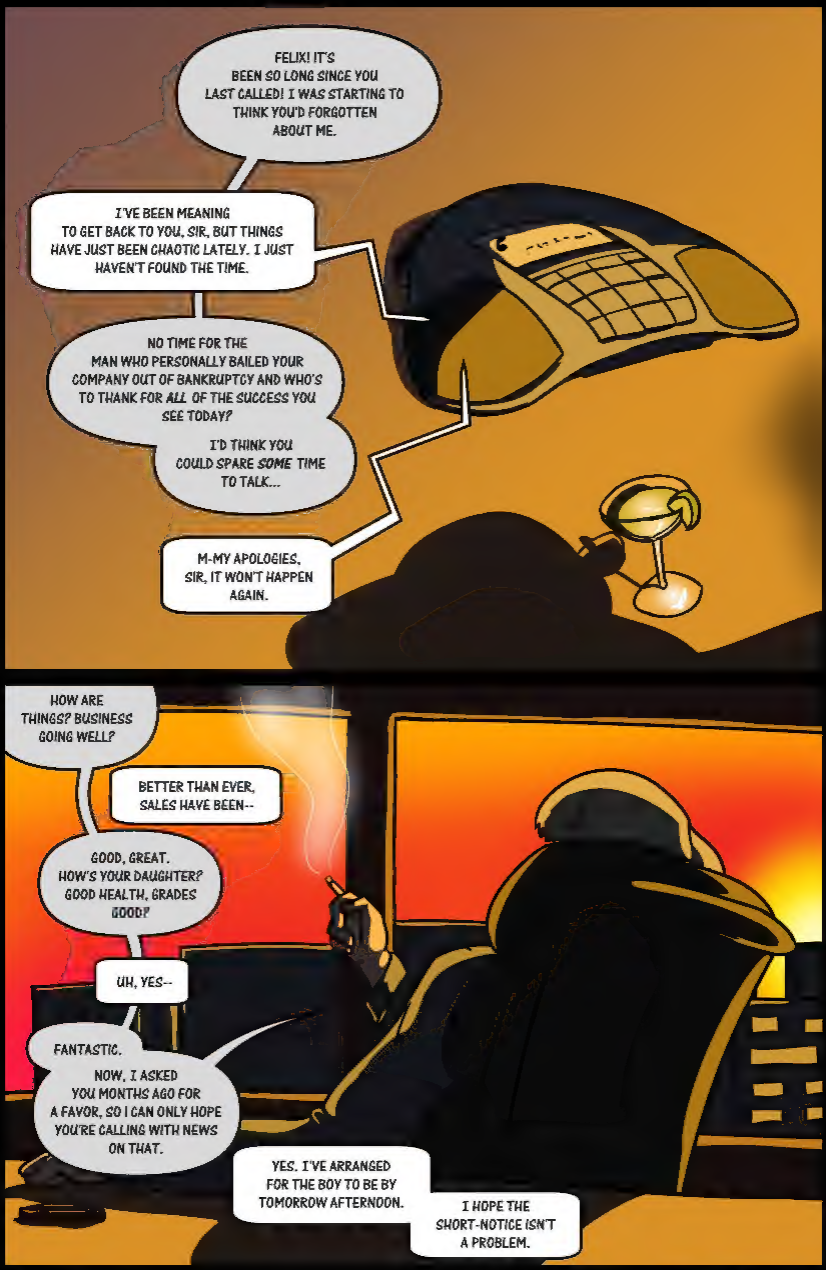
BLITZ PHOENIX

Chapter 11: An Unwelcome Interview

Emily Brackhan

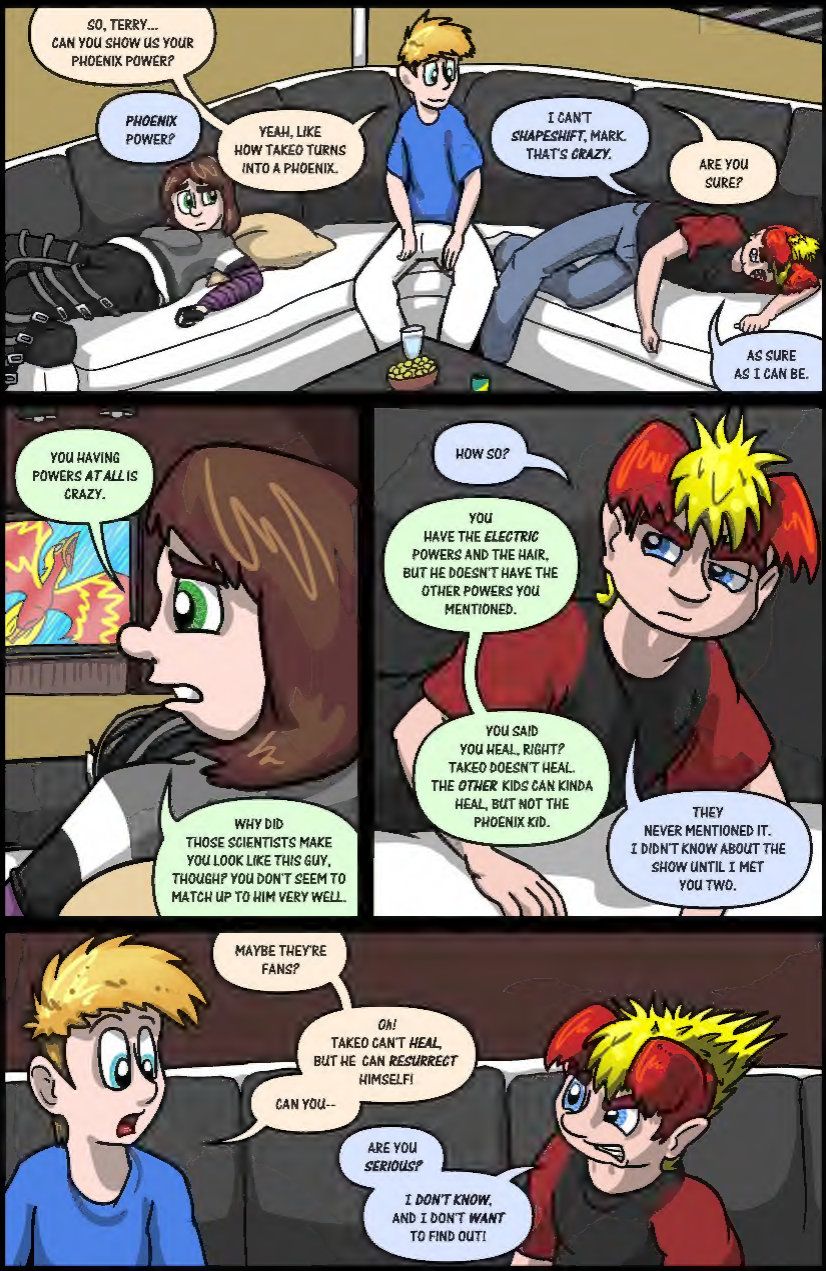
http://www.blitzphoenix.com/


FELIX! IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE YOU LAST CALLED! I WAS STARTING TO THINK YOU'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME.
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO GET BACK TO YOU, SIR, BUT THINGS HAVE JUST BEEN CHAOTIC LATELY. I JUST HAVEN'T FOUND THE TIME.
NO TIME FOR THE MAN WHO PERSONALLY BAILED YOUR COMPANY OUT OF BANKRUPTCY AND WHO'S TO THANK FOR ALL OF THE SUCCESS YOU SEE TODAY?
I'D THINK YOU COULD SPARE SOME TIME TO TALK...
M-MY APOLOGIES, SIR, IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN.
HOW ARE THINGS? BUSINESS GOING WELL?
BETTER THAN EVER, SALES HAVE BEEN--
GOOD, GREAT. HOW'S YOUR DAUGHTER? GOOD HEALTH, GRADES GOOD?
UH, YES--
FANTASTIC.
NOW, I ASKED YOU MONTHS AGO FOR A FAVOR, SO I CAN ONLY HOPE YOU'RE CALLING WITH NEWS ON THAT.
YES. I'VE ARRANGED FOR THE BOY TO BE BY TOMORROW AFTERNOON.
I HOPE THE SHORT-NOTICE ISN'T A PROBLEM.

IT'S ABOUT TIME!
NO, IT'S NOT A PROBLEM! I SHOULD BE ABLE TO SWING BY. KNOCK A FEW THINGS OFF MY SCHEDULE, START UP THE OL' PRIVATE JET. NOT A PROBLEM, SINCE THIS IS FAIRLY IMPORTANT...
BUT ALSO SEVERAL MONTHS LATE. APPARENTLY YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH THIS MEANS TO ME, FELIX.
I-I'M SORRY, SIR. THE BOY'S UNCLE, CHARLES, WOULDN'T LET ME ASK HIM.
SEE, THAT'S NOT REALLY AN ANSWER, FELIX. IS CHARLES THE ONE WHO YOU OWE EVERYTHING TO?
N-NO--
THEN HE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE ONE YOU WERE EVEN TALKING TO.
BUT I SUPPOSE AS LONG AS THE ARRAINGMENT HAS BEEN MADE, I CAN FORGIVE YOU THIS TIME.
NOW, HAVE YOU NOTICED ANYONE UNFAMILIAR COMING TO THE HOUSE? PERHAPS A WOMAN?
A WOMAN? NO.
ANYTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY?
WELL, THE BOY... DID ASSAULT OUR FAMILY DOG.

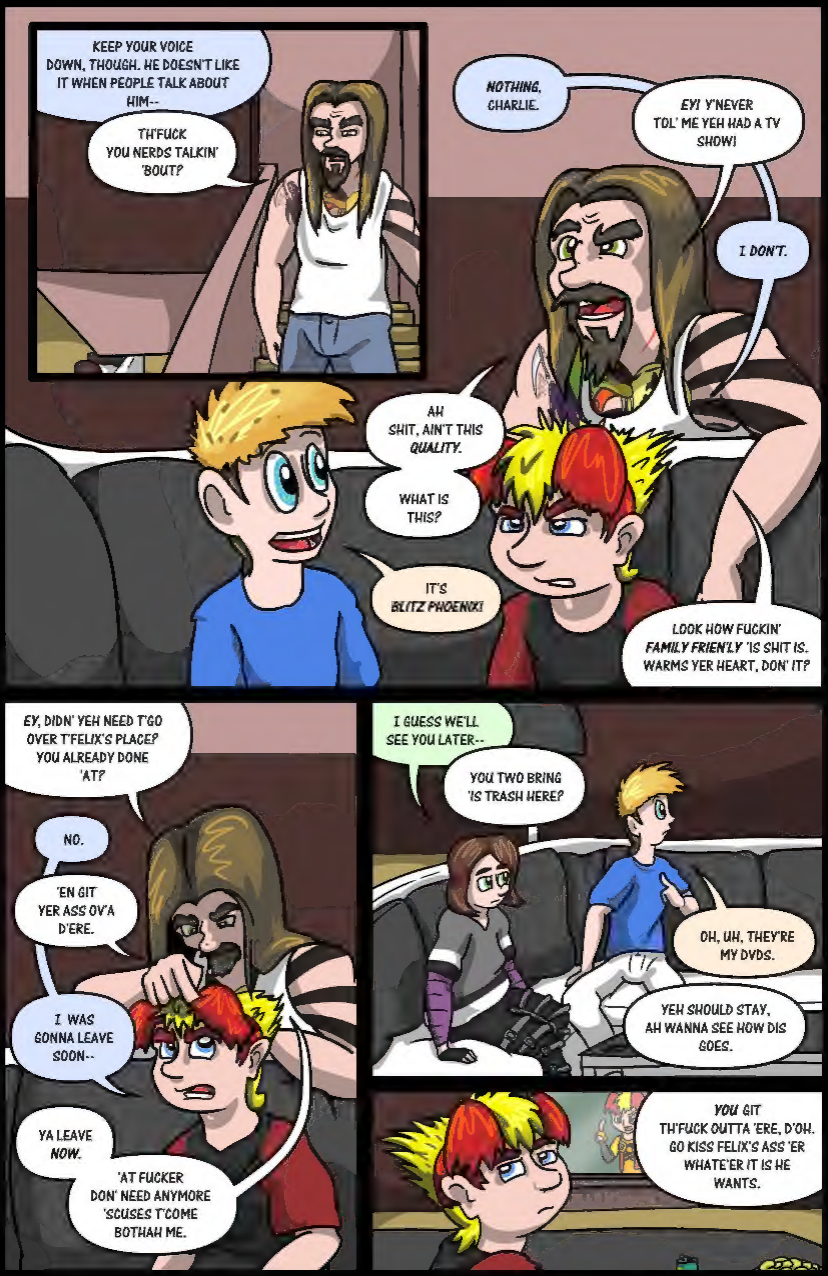
OH?
SHE'S COVERED IN WHAT THE DOCTORS SAID WERE LIKELY ELECTRICAL BURNS.
SHE'S GOING TO RECOVER, BUT WILL NEVER TRULY BE THE SAME--
ELECTRICAL BURNS?!
HA!
WHAT'D HE DO?
HE SAID SHE BIT THROUGH A CORD FROM AN ELECTRICAL RAZOR, WHEN THEY TRIED TO SHAVE HER FOR A PRANK. THE RAZOR THEY CARRIED WAS INTACT, HOWEVER.
I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT HE DID, HE CAN'T BE IN HIS RIGHT MIND.
FELIX, YOU JUST MADE MY DAY! THIS NEWS COULDN'T BE ANY BETTER!
...EXCUSE ME--?
SORRY TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR DOG! I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW. HAVE A NICE NIGHT, FELIX.
YOU HEAR THAT?! HER OWN SON! ALL BUT CONFIRMED!
SO IT WOULD SEEM.
SO AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED, SHE'S A *HYPOCRITE* TOO!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, SHE FINALLY GOT IT TO WORK! TOOK HER LONG ENOUGH!
BEST NOT TO GET AHEAD OF OURSELVES, SIR.
SEEMS ODD HE WOULD BE STAYING WITH HIS UNCLE IF HE WERE REALLY A CIRCUIT, DON'T YOU THINK?
GOOD POINT, FAIR POINT. WE'LL SEE HIM IN PERSON SOON, THEN I CAN JUDGE FOR MYSELF.

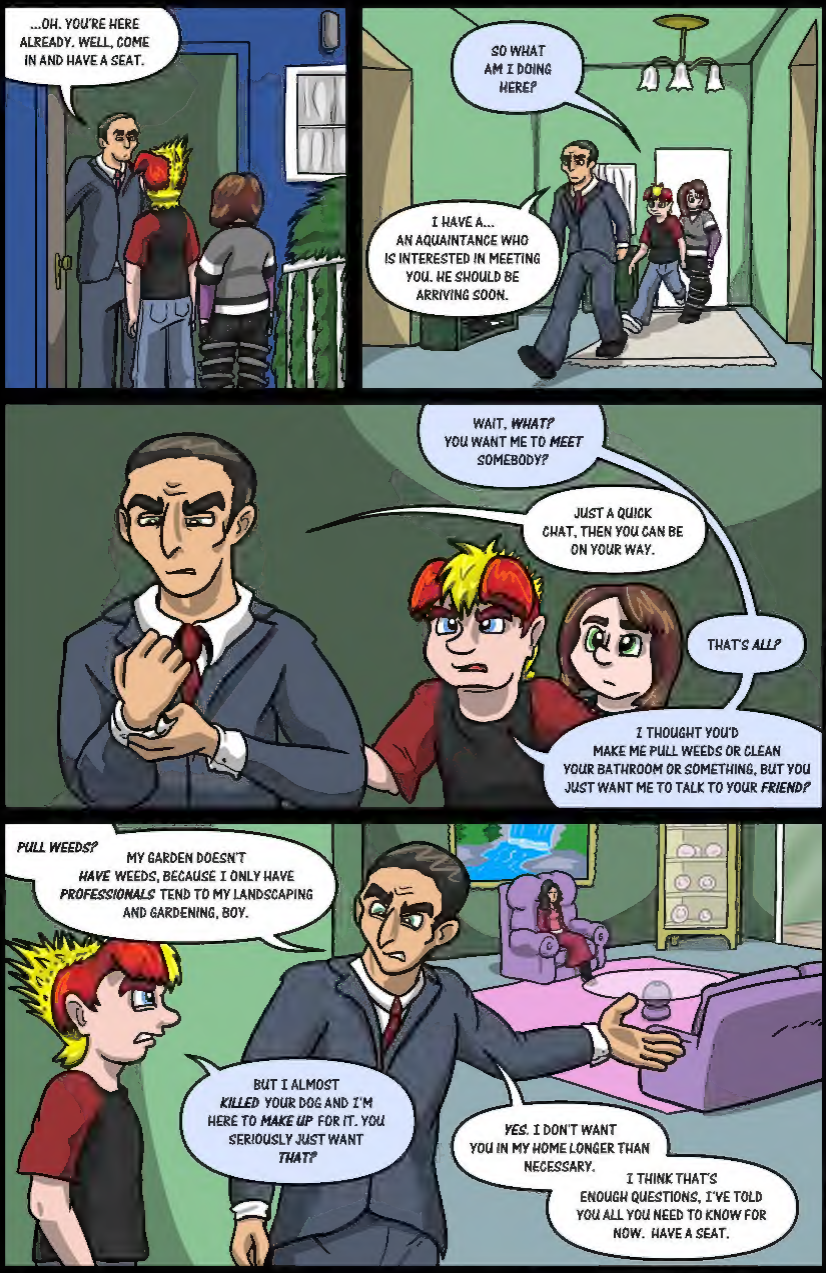
KAIN! HOW COULD YOU BETRAY US?!
COME BACK, KAIN! YOU'RE OUR FRIEND!
YOU AREN'T MY FRIENDS! YOU NEVER WERE! YOU DON'T RESPECT ME!
FWHP
FWHP
FWHP
FWHP
YOU DON'T RESPECT HOW POWERFUL I AM!
THAT'S NOT TRUE, KAIN! WE'RE A TEAM, WE CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU!
FOOM!
FWISH!
I'M JOINING THE DARK ARMY. DON'T FOLLOW ME.
COME BACK!!
YOU GUYS ARE FUCKING LOSERS, OF COURSE HE'S LEAVING.
DO YOU HAVE TO KEEP TALKING OVER THE GOOD PARTS?
NONE OF IT'S GOOD.


SO, TERRY... CAN YOU SHOW US YOUR PHOENIX POWER?
PHOENIX POWER?
YEAH, LIKE HOW TAKEO TURNS INTO A PHOENIX.
I CAN'T SHAPESHIFT, MARK. THAT'S CRAZY.
ARE YOU SURE?
@!
AS SURE AS I CAN BE.
YOU HAVING POWERS AT ALL IS CRAZY.
WHY DID THOSE SCIENTISTS MAKE YOU LOOK LIKE THIS GUY, THOUGH? YOU DON'T SEEM TO MATCH UP TO HIM VERY WELL.
HOW SO?
YOU HAVE THE ELECTRIC POWERS AND THE HAIR, BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE THE OTHER POWERS YOU MENTIONED.
YOU SAID YOU HEAL, RIGHT? TAKEO DOESN'T HEAL. THE OTHER KIDS CAN KINDA HEAL, BUT NOT THE PHOENIX KID.
THEY NEVER MENTIONED IT. I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE SHOW UNTIL I MET YOU TWO.
MAYBE THEY'RE FANS?
OH! TAKEO CAN'T HEAL, BUT HE CAN RESURRECT HIMSELF!
CAN YOU--
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
I DON'T KNOW, AND I DON'T WANT TO FIND OUT!

SO... YOUR UNCLE'S THE ONLY OTHER FAMILY YOU HAVE, RIGHT? IF YOU'RE HIDING FROM YOUR MOM, ISN'T THIS THE FIRST PLACE SHE'D LOOK?
YEAH, BUT--
THIS SEEMS LIKE THE WORST PLACE TO HIDE.
WHERE ELSE WOULD I GO?
ANYWHERE ELSE?
WITH NO MONEY? SO I SHOULD LIVE ON THE STREET?
BESIDES, I TOLD YOU MY HAIR JUST GROWS BACK. I CAN'T CHANGE HOW I LOOK, SO I CAN'T EXACTLY HIDE.
WEAR A WIG, YOU DOOFUS.
NO, THEY'RE TOO MUCH OF A HASSLE. JUST WEARING MARK'S HAT WAS MAKING STATIC BUILD UP IN MY HAIR. IT WAS GIVING ME A HEADACHE.
ANYWAY, I THINK CHARLIE'S PLACE IS SAFE.
WHY?
I THINK HE HAS SOME SORT OF WAY TO KEEP HER FROM COMING HERE.

HOW?
HE MAY HAVE GONE THROUGH WHAT I DID.
I'M NOT LETTING YOU MONSTERS DO WHAT YOU DID TO CHARLIE!
AMANDA KNOWS HIM, BUT HE KEEPS INSISTING HE DOESN'T KNOW HER. HE'S SUPER SHADY ABOUT IT ANYTIME I BRING IT UP, SO I THINK HE'S HIDING SOMETHING.
HE MIGHT EVEN HAVE POWERS LIKE MINE.
WHAT?! THAT CREEP HAS POWERS TOO?!
WE NEED TO LEAVE.
...MIGHT HAVE POWERS.
I PROMISE HE'S NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING, HE'S JUST AN ASSHOLE.
BUT IF HE GOT OUT OF THERE LIKE I DID, THEN AMANDA ISN'T COMING AFTER HIM, 'CAUSE HE'S BEEN HERE FOR YEARS.
SO MAYBE HE'S FIGURED OUT HOW TO KEEP HER AWAY? OR MAYBE SHE REALLY DOESN'T KNOW WHERE HE LIVES...
EITHER WAY, I'VE BEEN HERE FOR FIVE MONTHS NOW, AND NOTHING'S HAPPENED.


KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN, THOUGH. HE DOESN'T LIKE IT WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT HIM--
TH'FUCK YOU NERDS TALKIN' 'BOUT?
NOTHING, CHARLIE.
EY! Y'NEVER TOL' ME YEH HAD A TV SHOW!
I DON'T.
AH SHIT, AIN'T THIS QUALITY.
WHAT IS THIS?
IT'S BLITZ PHOENIX!
LOOK HOW FUCKIN' FAMILY FRIEN'LY 'IS SHIT IS. WARMS YER HEART, DON' IT?
EY, DIDN' YEH NEED T'GO OVER T'FELIX'S PLACE? YOU ALREADY DONE 'AT?
NO.
'EN GIT YER ASS OV'A D'ERE.
I WAS GONNA LEAVE SOON--
YA LEAVE NOW.
'AT FUCKER DON' NEED ANYMORE 'SCUSES T'COME BOTHAH ME.
I GUESS WE'LL SEE YOU LATER--
YOU TWO BRING 'IS TRASH HERE?
OH, UH, THEY'RE MY DVDS.
YEH SHOULD STAY, AH WANNA SEE HOW DIS GOES.
YOU GIT TH'FUCK OUTTA 'ERE, D'OH. GO KISS FELIX'S ASS 'ER WHATE'ER IT IS HE WANTS.


...OH. YOU'RE HERE ALREADY. WELL, COME IN AND HAVE A SEAT.
SO WHAT AM I DOING HERE?
I HAVE A... AN AQUAINTANCE WHO IS INTERESTED IN MEETING YOU. HE SHOULD BE ARRIVING SOON.
WAIT. *WHAT?* YOU WANT ME TO *MEET* SOMEBODY?
JUST A QUICK CHAT, THEN YOU CAN BE ON YOUR WAY.
THAT'S *ALL?*
I THOUGHT YOU'D MAKE ME PULL WEEDS OR CLEAN YOUR BATHROOM OR SOMETHING, BUT YOU JUST WANT ME TO TALK TO YOUR *FRIEND?*
PULL WEEDS? MY GARDEN DOESN'T *HAVE* WEEDS, BECAUSE I ONLY HAVE *PROFESSIONALS* TEND TO MY LANDSCAPING AND GARDENING, BOY.
BUT I ALMOST *KILLED* YOUR DOG AND I'M HERE TO *MAKE UP* FOR IT. YOU SERIOUSLY JUST WANT *THAT?*
YES. I DON'T WANT YOU IN MY HOME LONGER THAN NECESSARY.
I THINK THAT'S ENOUGH QUESTIONS, I'VE TOLD YOU ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR NOW. HAVE A SEAT.

YOUR FRIENDS ARE HERE, SWEETHEART. KEEP THEM BUSY WHILE OUR GUEST ARRIVES, WILL YOU?
WHY IS SHE HERE?
TERRY'S UNCLE IS A CREEP.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE WELCOME HERE.
Soooo. HOW'S THE DOG DOING?
I HOPE YOUR EYES ARE EATEN OUT BY THOUSANDS OF SPIDERS
OH. OKAY THEN

SO WHO'S THIS GUY WE'RE MEETING WITH?
JUST TERRY
OKAY, FINE. BUT WHO IS IT?
HE'S AN OLD BUSINESS PARTNER OF MY FATHER'S. CALLS HIMSELF HAZARD.
WHAT'S HE WANT?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
JUST . SEEMS WEIRD HE'D WANT TO TALK TO ME.
MY DAD MADE IT SOUND LIKE HE KNEW WHO YOU WERE OR SOMETHING.
DON'T KNOW, DON'T CARE. NONE OF IT'S ANY OF MY BUSINESS.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SIT HERE AND BABYSIT US.
RIGHT, SO YOU CAN SNEAK OFF AND ROB US?
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE, ISN'T IT, NATALYA?

ROB YOU?! WOULD YOU DROP IT! I'M NOT A THIEF!
THE ONLY CRIMINALS I KNOW ARE YOU AND YOUR BOYFRIEND!
OH, REALLY? SO YOU THREE KIDNAPPING AND MUTILATING MY DOG WAS JUST AY OKAY, THEN?!
WE WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN BEEN AT THAT DOG SHOW IF THAT MEATHEAD GABE HADN'T BROKEN OUT THE WINDOWS AT MARK'S HOUSE!
WINDOWS?
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE GABE.
WELL HE DID! YOU AND GABRIEL HAVE BEEN HARRASSING US FOR YEARS WHEN WE NEVER DID ANYTHING TO YOU TWO!
SHUT UP, YOU'RE A LIAR!
I AM NOT, YOU SCRAWNY LITTLE
GAK!
HEY... I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I STILL DON'T WANT TO GET ARRESTED TODAY

MR. HAZARD, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
MAY I TAKE YOUR--
THANKS FELIX, TRY NOT TO GET IT DIRTY.
OF COURSE NOT, SIR.
DID YOU HAVE A NICE FLIGHT--
SO WHAT'S THIS KID'S NAME?
TERRY, SIR
BELVEDERE!
YES
WHERE IS HE?
IN THE PARLOR
WELL WHY ARE YOU JUST STANDING THERE? LEAD THE WAY, I'M TIRED OF WASTING TIME

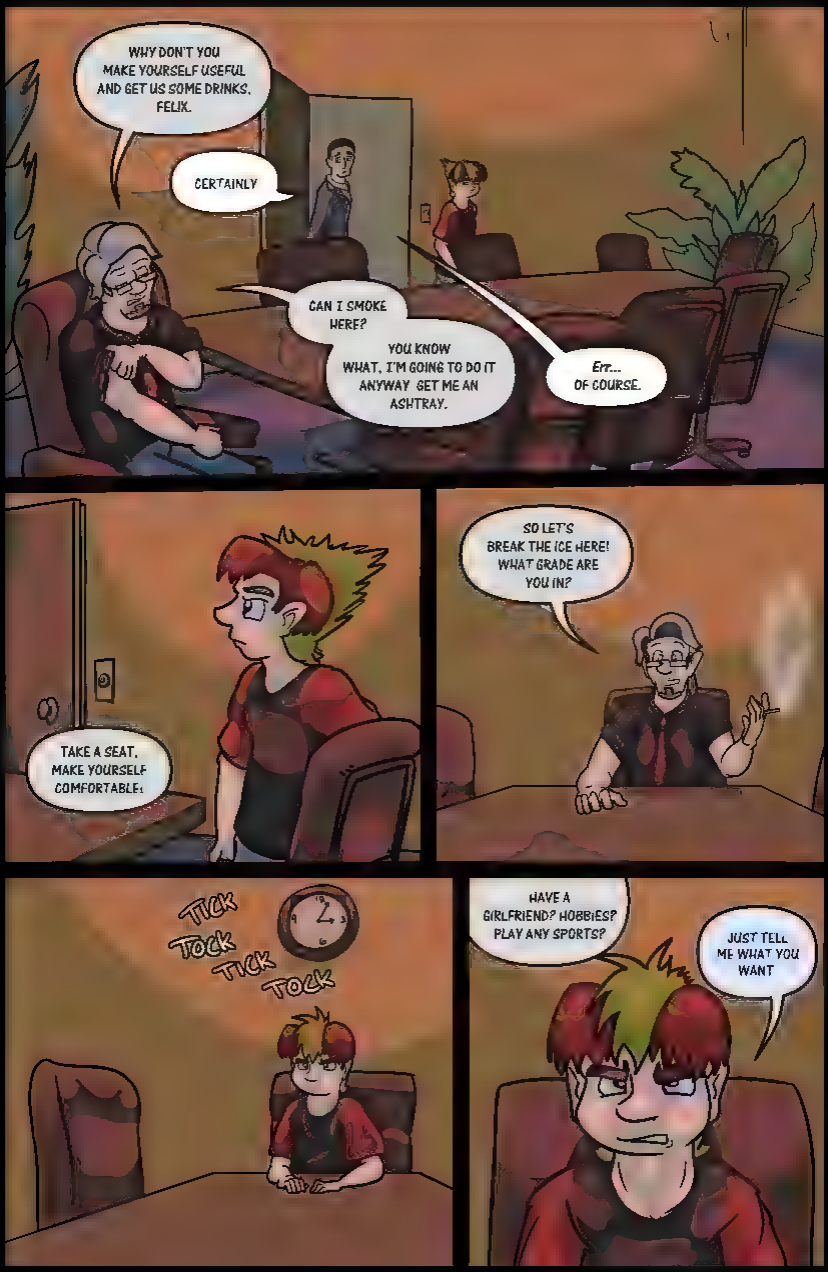
SO DO YOU KNOW THIS HAZARD GUY?
NEVER HEARD OF HIM
I WAS THINKING .. THAT STUFF YOU WERE SAYING EARLIER, ABOUT YOUR MOM AND THE LAB?
YOU DON'T THINK THIS GUY COULD BE RELATED TO THAT, DO YOU?
MAYBE IT'S A LONG SHOT. BUT THIS WHOLE THING SEEMS KINDA FISHY
HERE THEY ARE, SIR. YOU REMEMBER MY DAUGHTER, CORRECT?
OF COURSE! IT'S RACHAEL, RIGHT?
JESSICA, SIR! IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
AH, THAT'S RIGHT! YOU'RE SO GROWN-UP SINCE THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU! WHAT A BEAUTY!
AND SO BRIGHT, TOO! YOU'LL GET FAR I'M SURE

BUT YOU'RE NOT THE ONE I'M HERE FOR TODAY
OF COURSE, ONE MOMENT!
INTRODUCE YOURSELF AND BE PLEASANT
THIS MAN IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MY FATHER, SO DON'T SAY ANYTHING STUPID
HERE HE IS!
UH, HI I'M TERRY
SHAKE HIS HAND IDIOT!
YES! SO YOU'RE THE ONE I'VE HEARD SO MUCH ABOUT!
YOU HAVE?
WATCH IT

YES! YOU'RE QUITE THE TROUBLEMAKER, AREN'T YOU? NOT A FAN OF DOGS?
Uhh, I GUESS NOT.
NEITHER AM I, ACTUALLY! THEY'RE TOO JUMPY AND SMELLY
BUT SERIOUSLY! I'M SO EXCITED TO MEET YOU *INCREDIBLY*
WHY?
I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS, AND YOU MAY BE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN ANSWER THEM
WELL I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING, SO YOU'RE PROBABLY WASTING YOUR TIME.
BUT I THINK YOU DO! YOU'RE *AMANDA S* SON, AREN'T YOU?
UH
SURE YOU ARE, YOU LOOK *JUST* LIKE HER! I COULD PICK YOU BOTH OUT IN A *CROWD*.
BY YOUR *FACE*, I MEAN! I SUPPOSE *YOU'D* STAND OUT IN A CROWD, REGARDLESS! *HAH!*

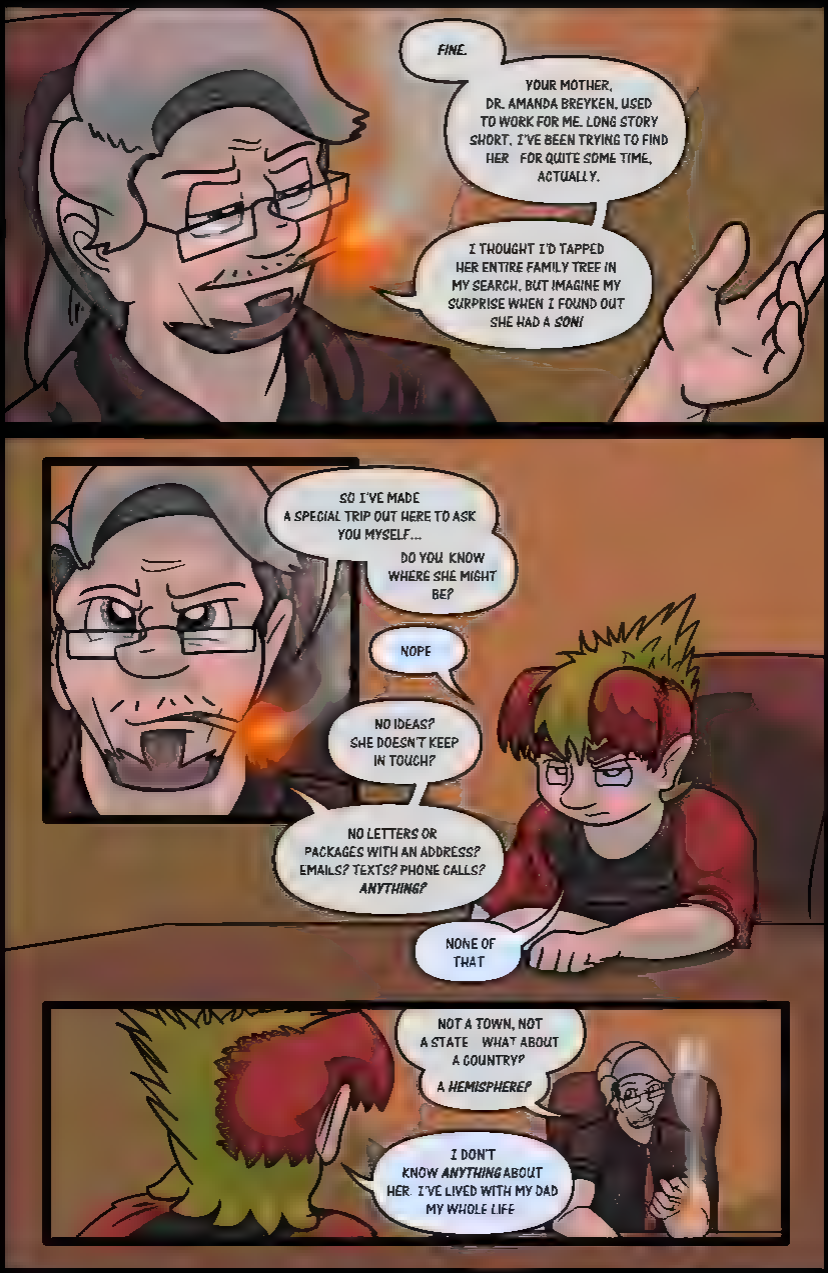
TERRY DOESN'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT HIS MOM, SO YOU CAN SHOVE OFF!
BE QUIET, YOU RUDE GIRL
NOW FELIX, IT'S ALL RIGHT
SO TELL ME, WHO ARE YOU?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
HARDLY FAIR TO NOT INTRODUCE YOURSELF! BUT I CAN PROMISE I'VE ONLY COME HERE AS A FRIEND
GET LOST!
HEY NEEDLE NOSE, ANY WAY WE COULD GET SOME PRIVACY?
OF COURSE, THERE'S A ROOM DOWN THE HALL
COME THIS WAY, BOY

TAKEO, DO YOU THINK HE WORKS FOR AMANDA?
UNLIKELY BUT HE SEEMS TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THE MARIONETTE PROJECT.
I RECOGNIZE THE NAME HAZARD FROM SPARSE ENTRIES KEPT IN THE DOCTORS' SERVERS WHERE I WAS STORED
DR. BREYKEN'S GROUP CONSIDERS HIM A THREAT I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS FOR US.
YOU'RE NOT STILL GONNA TALK TO THIS GUY, ARE YOU? HE'S SHADY AS ALL HELL
IF I DON'T, FELIX IS GOING TO PRESS CHARGES ON THAT DOG.
AND YOU THINK THIS IS WORTH IT?
I DON'T KNOW.
HURRY UP, BOY
I'LL JUST SEE WHAT HE WANTS


WHY DON'T YOU MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL AND GET US SOME DRINKS, FELIX.
CERTAINLY
CAN I SMOKE HERE?
YOU KNOW WHAT, I'M GOING TO DO IT ANYWAY GET ME AN ASHTRAY.
Err... OF COURSE.
TAKE A SEAT, MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE.
SO LET'S BREAK THE ICE HERE! WHAT GRADE ARE YOU IN?
TICK TOCK TICK TOCK
HAVE A GIRLFRIEND? HOBBIES? PLAY ANY SPORTS?
JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT

GET LOST, COW
YOU WEREN'T EVEN
INVITED HERE
YOU GET LOST!
YOU SAID YOURSELF THIS IS
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
THAT WAS
BEFORE THIS GOT REALLY
INTERESTING!
BUT YOU CAN'T
JUST EAVESDROP ON THEM,
THIS IS AN IMPORTANT BUSINESS
PARTNER OF MY FATHER'S! THIS IS
CONFIDENTIAL!
WHAT ABOUT
YOU?
I, OF COURSE,
CAN BE EXPECTED TO
KEEP ANY BUSINESS
CONFIDENTIAL!
AND TERRY
NEARLY KILLED MY DOG
YESTERDAY! SO MY TICKET'S
BOUGHT AND PAID FOR.
NOW
GET OUT OF THE
WAY!
NO. STOP
WHINING SO LOUD. THEY
MIGHT HEAR YOU.

OKAY, OKAY. LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN
PROBABLY NOT FAIR TO THROW ALL THESE QUESTIONS AT YOU WHEN I'M STILL A STRANGER, RIGHT? SO WHY DON'T I START?
MY NAME IS [redacted]
AS I'M SURE YOU ALREADY KNOW, I'M A BUSINESSMAN. FELIX IS A FRIEND AND PARTNER OF MINE, OF SORTS.
I OWN SEVERAL HIGH-END BIOROBOTICS COMPANIES AND HAVE WORKED WITH ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE GLOBE
SHEESH, YOU'RE A GRUMPY ONE! I'M GETTING THERE KID, THROW ME A BONE!
NO GET TO THE POINT
AND NONE OF THAT TELLS ME WHY YOU WANT TO TALK TO ME.


FINE.
YOUR MOTHER, DR. AMANDA BREYKEN, USED TO WORK FOR ME. LONG STORY SHORT, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND HER FOR QUITE SOME TIME, ACTUALLY.
I THOUGHT I'D TAPPED HER ENTIRE FAMILY TREE IN MY SEARCH. BUT IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN I FOUND OUT SHE HAD A SON!
SO I'VE MADE A SPECIAL TRIP OUT HERE TO ASK YOU MYSELF...
DO YOU KNOW WHERE SHE MIGHT BE?
NOPE
NO IDEAS? SHE DOESN'T KEEP IN TOUCH?
NO LETTERS OR PACKAGES WITH AN ADDRESS? EMAILS? TEXTS? PHONE CALLS? ANYTHING?
NONE OF THAT
NOT A TOWN, NOT A STATE WHAT ABOUT A COUNTRY?
A HEMISPHERE?
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HER I'VE LIVED WITH MY DAD MY WHOLE LIFE

YES, BUT YOU DON'T ANYMORE, CORRECT? YOU'RE STAYING WITH [illegible]
FROM WHAT I UNDERSTAND, YOU DIDN'T COME TO LIVE WITH YOUR UNCLE UNTIL ABOUT A MONTH AFTER YOUR FATHER'S DEATH.
YOUR MOTHER AND UNCLE ARE YOUR ONLY LIVING RELATIVES. I SUPPOSE THERE COULD BE MORE I'VE STILL MISSED, BUT IT'S SO UNLIKELY AT THIS POINT.
SO, UNLESS THERE IS SOME CLOSE FAMILY-FRIEND YOU WERE STAYING WITH ..
Y-YES... THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED--
NO IT ISN'T
YOU MUST NOT HAVE THOUGHT YOUR STORY THROUGH IF YOU'RE SO EAGER TO JUMP ON THE FIRST SPECULATION I OFFER.
NOW, LET'S SAY
AND THIS IS ALL JUST HYPOTHETICAL.
--BUT LET'S PRETEND I ALREADY KNOW YOU WERE WITH YOUR MOTHER FOR THAT TIME.
WHERE IS SHE?
WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO FIND HER?

SHE STOLE SOMETHING FROM ME. I'D LIKE IT BACK.
THAT'S IT?
TELL ME, ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH HER WORK?
NO
COME NOW. YOU CAN TELL ME.
WHY WOULD I BE?
FELIX TELLS ME YOU WERE HANDLING HIS DOG THE OTHER DAY
YOU HAD THE MUTT FOR NOT EVEN TWENTY MINUTES, AND WHEN IT TURNED BACK UP, IT WAS COVERED IN ELECTRICAL BURNS.
I... UH..
THE DOG BIT THROUGH SOME WIRES AND HURT ITSELF--
TERRY, PLEASE. THE SOONER YOU'RE HONEST, THE SOONER WE CAN BE DONE HERE.

Tch.. no you may not smoke in my house. The nerve...
Just keep doing what he asks, and my debt will be repaid soon.
WHAT ARE YOU-- GET AWAY FROM THAT DOOR!
JESSICA, YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER THAN THAT! I'M VERY DISAPPOINTED IN YOU!
SOR-RY, DADDY!
YOU, GIRL! YOU NEED TO LEAVE, NOW!
I'M HERE WITH TERRY!
HE'S ONLY HERE BECAUSE HAZARD REQUESTED HIM! BUT HAZARD DIDN'T ASK FOR YOU!
BEAT IT!

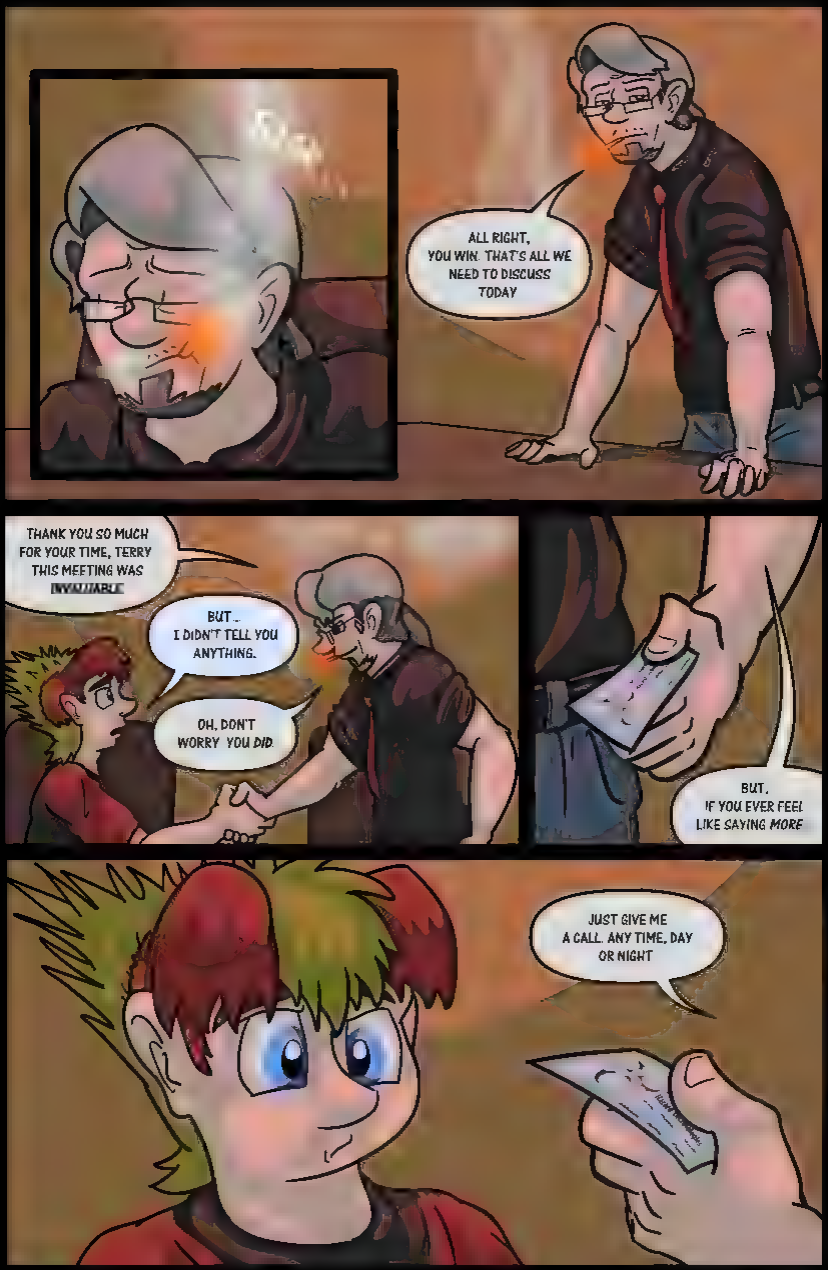
HERE'S YOUR DRINKS, MR. HAZARD
AH, EXCELLENT!
ANYTHING ELSE, SIR?
THAT'S ALL, BE ON YOUR WAY
YOU SAID HE WAS A FRIEND?
A GOOD FRIEND
IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HE FEELS THAT WAY
HAH! DON'T MIND FELIX, HE'S AN ODD CAT. BUT I M SURE YOU KNOW THAT, YOU LIVE NEXT TO HIM!
MUST BE FUN!

ENOUGH ABOUT FELIX. THOUGH! YOU SHOULD DRINK SOME WATER. I CAN SEE YOU SWEATING FROM HERE.
ASK WHAT DR BREYKEN STOLE FROM HIM
WHAT WHAT DID AMANDA STEAL FROM YOU?
OH, HONESTLY? A NUMBER OF THINGS. AND SHE'S CONTINUED TO BE A THORN IN MY SIDE OVER THE YEARS..
BUT THE DETAILS AREN'T IMPORTANT.
THEY ARE IF YOU WANT ME TO SAY ANYTHING.
SO YOU DO KNOW WHERE SHE IS?
NO
SAY YES
MAYBE

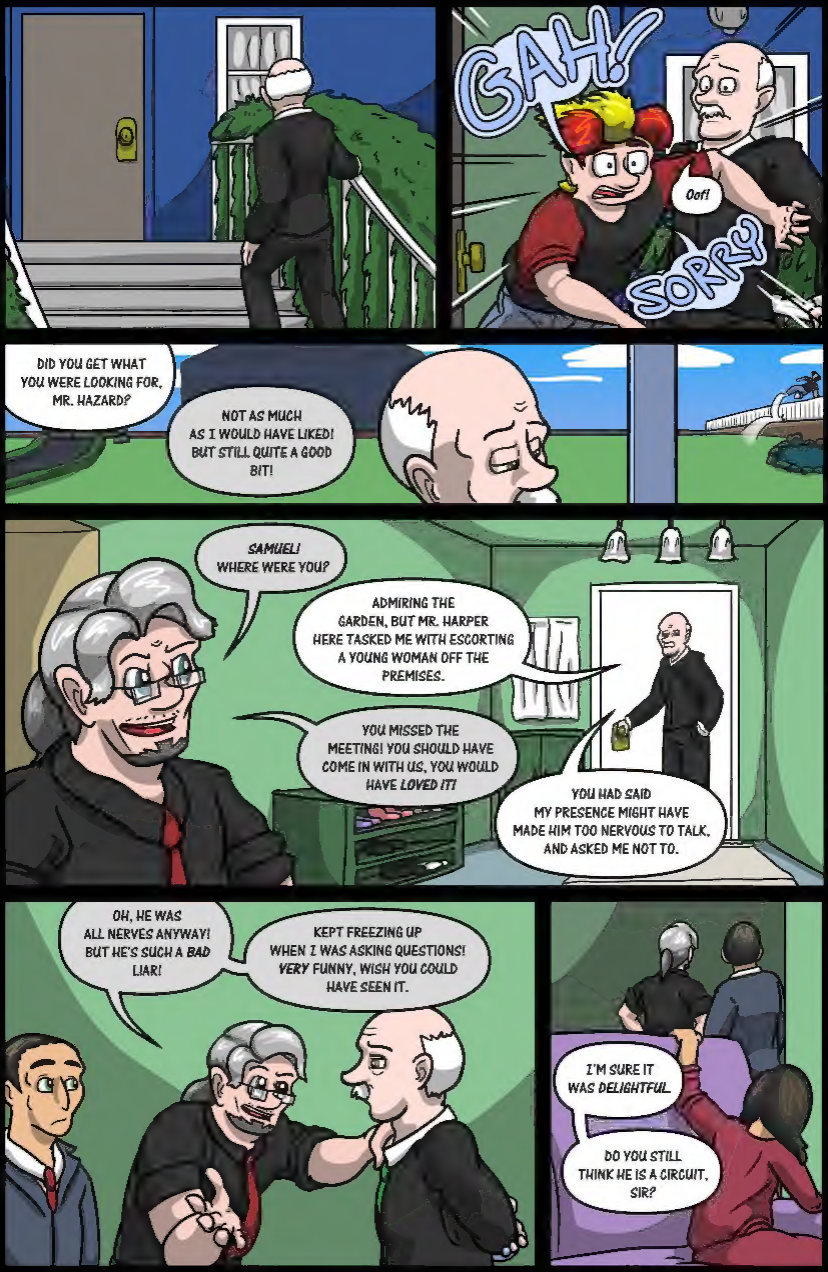
SHE WORKED FOR ME YEARS AGO, LIKE I SAID BUT SHE WASN'T HAPPY WITH.
OH, I DON'T REMEMBER. WORKING CONDITIONS? MAYBE I WASN'T PAYING HER ENOUGH WHO KNOWS?
BUT SHE CONVINCED A NUMBER OF MY RESEARCH TEAM TO DEFECT. SHE STOLE A PROJECT - MY TOP INVESTMENT AT THE TIME AND THEY ALL RAN OFF WITH IT
I'VE SINCE BEEN TRYING TO RECREATE THE PROJECT WITH NEW TEAMS. BUT MUCH OF THE ORIGINAL WORK WAS STOLEN OR DESTROYED. AND SHE CONTINUES TO INTERFERE WITH OUR PROGRESS FROM AFAR.
WHILE THERE WAS A LOT THAT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT TO RESTORE OURSELVES, WHAT I'D LIKE MOST OF ALL IS THE ADVANCED AI WE DEVELOPED. WE'VE MADE SOME OF OUR OWN, BUT THEY JUST DON'T COMPARE TO THE OLD ONE!
YOU WANT TO MAKE CIRCUITS?
THAT'S THE PLAN

IT'S SO VERY IMPORTANT THAT I FIND HER AGAIN. AT THIS POINT, WE SIMPLY CANNOT CONTINUE MY PROJECT UNTIL WE DO!
AND SINCE YOU SEEM TO BE SAYING YOU DON'T HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN HER... I WAS HOPING YOU COULD LEND ME A HAND.
THOUGH I'M GLAD TO HEAR YOU KNOW WHAT CIRCUITS ARE, SINCE YOU WANTED TO SPEND MOST OF THIS MEETING DENYING EVERYTHING.
YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE SAID CIRCUITS ALOUD.
IT CERTAINLY MAKES MY NEXT QUESTION EASIER WHEN YOU'RE ON-BOARD TO TALK ABOUT IT!
THAT SAID, I'M SURE THIS QUESTION ISN'T SURPRISING
Fr-fr-fr-fr-
GIVEN THE STRANGE INJURIES OF THE DOG, YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF CIRCUITS, AND YOUR DISAPPEARANCE AFTER YOUR FATHER'S DEATH..
MY GUESS IS YOU'RE PROBABLY A CIRCUIT YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU?

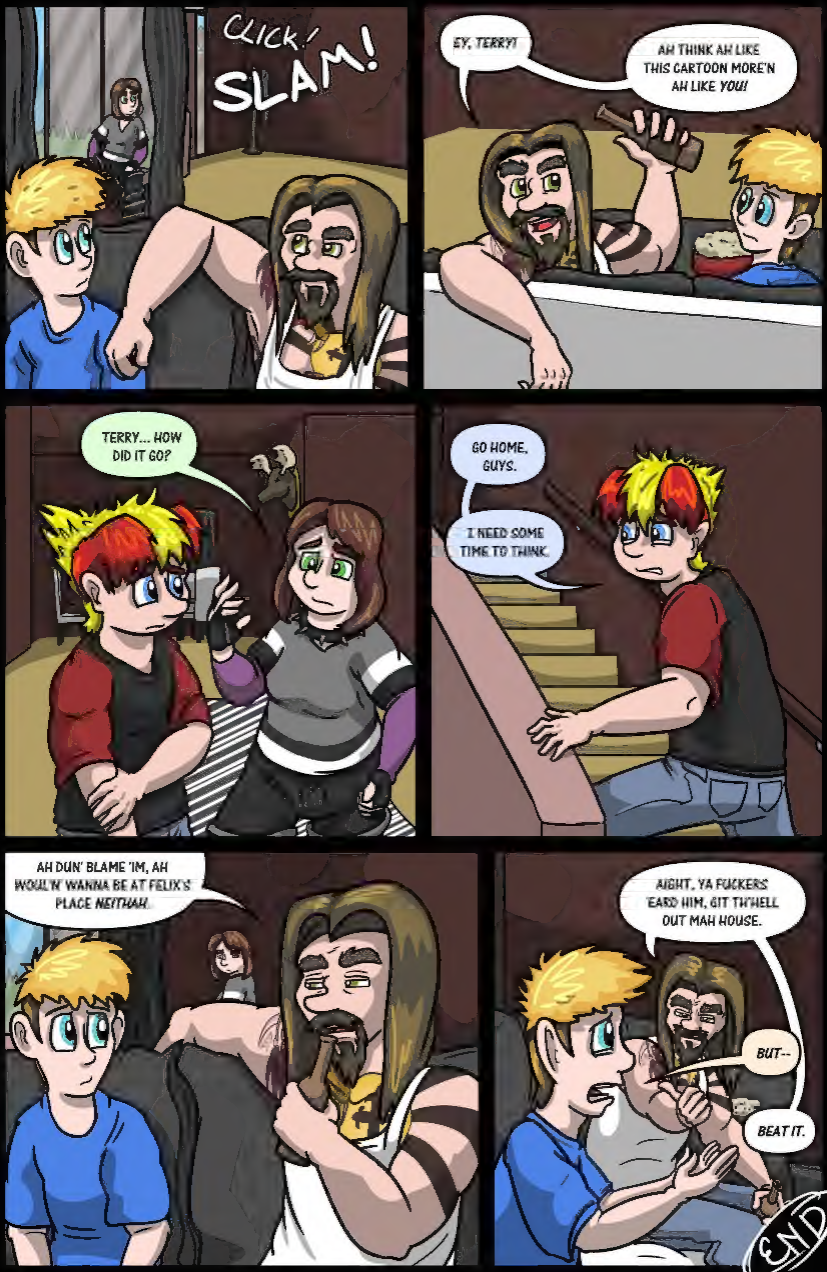
AHAHAHA!
YOU REALLY THINK I'M ONE?!
IT SURE SEEMS THAT WAY, DOESN'T IT?
MAYBE IF YOU'RE STUPID.
YOU KNOW THERE AREN'T ANY HUMAN CIRCUITS, RIGHT? THEY'RE ALL DOGS, JACKASS!
DOGS?
AND IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE AFTER, THEN WE'RE DONE TALKING.
NOW HOLD ON I CAN PAY YOU FOR ANY INFORMATION ON YOUR MOTHER.
I DON'T WANT MONEY
I DON'T HAVE THE INFORMATION YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.
AND I DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED WITH ANY OF THIS.


ALL RIGHT, YOU WIN. THAT'S ALL WE NEED TO DISCUSS TODAY
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME, TERRY THIS MEETING WAS INVALUABLE
BUT.. I DIDN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING.
OH, DON'T WORRY YOU DID
BUT, IF YOU EVER FEEL LIKE SAYING MORE
JUST GIVE ME A CALL. ANY TIME, DAY OR NIGHT

W-WAIT, YOU'RE REALLY JUST LEAVING?
YES. YOU DID SAY WE WERE DONE.
YOU'RE... GIVING UP?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO COME BACK, ARE YOU?
ARE YOU EXPECTING ME TO STALK YOU OR SOMETHING?
DON'T COME BACK!
UH, W-WELL...
I'M A BUSY MAN, I DON'T HAVE TIME TO CHASE LITTLE KIDS AROUND.
YOU SAID YOU DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED, AND SO I'M DONE WITH YOU.
HAVE A NICE EVENING, TERRY.


GAH!
Oof!
SORRY
DID YOU GET WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR, MR. HAZARD?
NOT AS MUCH AS I WOULD HAVE LIKED! BUT STILL QUITE A GOOD BIT!
SAMUEL! WHERE WERE YOU?
ADMIRING THE GARDEN, BUT MR. HARPER HERE TASKED ME WITH ESCORTING A YOUNG WOMAN OFF THE PREMISES.
YOU MISSED THE MEETING! YOU SHOULD HAVE COME IN WITH US, YOU WOULD HAVE LOVED IT!
YOU HAD SAID MY PRESENCE MIGHT HAVE MADE HIM TOO NERVOUS TO TALK, AND ASKED ME NOT TO.
OH, HE WAS ALL NERVES ANYWAY! BUT HE'S SUCH A BAD LIAR!
KEPT FREEZING UP WHEN I WAS ASKING QUESTIONS! VERY FUNNY, WISH YOU COULD HAVE SEEN IT.
I'M SURE IT WAS DELIGHTFUL.
DO YOU STILL THINK HE IS A CIRCUIT, SIR?

NOT SURE! THE NARRATIVE FITS WELL ENOUGH, BUT HIS EYES ARE THE WRONG COLOR!
THEY WERE ALWAYS RED BEFORE, WEREN'T THEY, SAM?
ON THE OLD TEST SUBJECTS, YES.
SEE, THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT. AND I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY HE'D BE OUT HERE IF HE WERE REALLY A CIRCUIT.
BUT HE DEFINITELY KNOWS ABOUT CIRCUITS. MAYBE THERE'S MORE TO THIS STORY.
YOU THINK MAYBE AMANDA'S NEARBY? OR MAYBE THIS KID'S A DEAD END AFTER ALL AND SHE'S JUST SET HIM UP AS A DISTRACTION.
...TEST SUBJECTS?
FELIX! I STILL WANT YOU TO KEEP AN EYE ON THIS KID. IF ANYTHING COMES UP, REPORT IT TO ME IMMEDIATELY.
O-OF COURSE, SIR. I'M SO SORRY TO HAVE WASTED YOUR TIME--
NO, NO! THIS WAS ABSOLUTELY NOT A WASTE! THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN HOSTING THIS, FELIX.
THOUGH MAYBE NEXT TIME, DO IT A LITTLE SOONER!


CLICK!
SLAM!
EY, TERRY!
AH THINK AH LIKE THIS CARTOON MORE'N AH LIKE YOU!
TERRY... HOW DID IT GO?
GO HOME, GUYS.
I NEED SOME TIME TO THINK.
AH DUN' BLAME 'IM, AH WOULN' WANNA BE AT FELIX'S PLACE NEITHAH.
AIGHT, YA FUCKERS 'EARD HIM, GIT TH'HELL OUT MAH HOUSE.
BUT--
BEAT IT.
END